Forest, and the southern boundary of the plateau contains lands within the Glen Canyon National Recreation area (fig. 1). Bryce Canyon and Capitol Reef National Parks are located west and east of the plateau, respectively (fig. 1).

Previous geologic studies and mining activity

Coal in the Kaiparowits Plateau region was first mined by settlers in the late 1800's near the town of Escalante, and small mines produced coal for local needs until the early 1960's. Locations of the abandoned mines and adits are shown on figure 1. Production figures from Doelling and Graham (1972, p. 71) shown on table 1 indicate that less than 50,000 short tons of coal have been mined from the Kaiparowits Plateau.

Although coal investigations were first reported in the Kaiparowits Plateau by Gregory and Moore (1931), it was not until the early 1960's that energy companies expressed an interest to commercially develop coal in the region. Since then, coal leases have been held by at least 23 companies (Doelling and Graham, 1972, p. 98-99), and about 1,000 company coal test holes have been drilled in the plateau (Jim Kohler, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, 1991, oral communication). Plans were made in 1965 to develop a 5,000-megawatt coal-burning power plant but were revised in the mid 1970's to a 3,000-megawatt generating plant after controversy over environmental issues (Sargent, 1984, p. 8). Construction plans were finally discontinued because of government action and pending lawsuits over environmental concerns (Sargent, 1984). Currently, only a few companies retain coal leases in the area.

The U.S. Geological Survey conducted investigations to study the geology and assess the region's coal resources. Stratigraphic investigations resulted in formal divisions of some Upper Cretaceous and Tertiary strata (Peterson, 1969b; Bowers, 1972, respectively). Other sedimentological investigations demonstrated the detailed relationships between coal-bearing continental and related marine strata and provided sequence stratigraphic divisions for the Upper